

HOUSE RESOLUTION 179

By Bass

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Martha Jean Blankenship Ferguson of Pulaski.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Martha Jean Blankenship Ferguson; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ferguson was a highly regarded teacher and administrator in the Giles County School System, which she served for thirty years; her dedication to her profession was only matched by her devotion to her faith and her family; and

WHEREAS, born August 31, 1938, in Collinwood, Martha Jean Blankenship Ferguson was the daughter of Fred Blankenship and Pauline Majors Blankenship; although she was born prematurely, Mrs. Ferguson thrived as a child; and

WHEREAS, a 1956 graduate of Hardin County High School, she earned her bachelors degree from Lambuth College in 1960, a month after she married her husband, Reverend George D. Ferguson; and

WHEREAS, over the course of their travels in the ministry, Martha Ferguson continued to pursue her education, earning a Master of Arts in English from Moorhead State University in Moorhead, Minnesota; she also attended Middle Tennessee State University, from which she received her Specialist in Education degree; and

WHEREAS, in her fifty-year career in education, Mrs. Ferguson taught at the secondary and college levels in Nebraska, Minnesota, California, Michigan, Florida, and Tennessee; upon her retirement from the Giles County School System in 2008, she had served for five years as a Supervisor of Instruction, a position she assumed after teaching English for twenty-five years at Giles County High School; and

WHEREAS, an active and valued member of her profession, Martha Ferguson served as the Advisor for the Future Teachers Club at Giles County High; in 2001, she was one of six finalists chosen for Teacher of the Year for the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, when Martin Methodist College inaugurated its education honorary society, Mrs. Ferguson became the only educator from the Giles County School System to be chosen for membership; and

WHEREAS, Martha Ferguson was an active and devout member of the First United Methodist Church in Pulaski, which served faithfully for many years, but one of her greatest joys was attending services in Triune at the church led by her son, Reverend Peter Ferguson; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ferguson was deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Ferguson is survived by her loving husband and her children and their spouses: Megan and Robert James, the Reverend Peter and Emily Ferguson, and David Ferguson; and

WHEREAS, she will also be sorely missed by her father and his wife, Reverend Fred and June Wheeler Blankenship; her sisters and brothers-in-law, Judy and George Cheatham, Julia Rich, Freda and John Evans, and Freddie and Douglas Summers; her four nieces and nephews; and her six grandchildren, Abby James, Gracie James, Will James, Shandra Ferguson, Alec Ferguson, and Lilli Ferguson, and Jaclyn Ferguson; and

WHEREAS, Martha Ferguson was preceded in death by her mother and step-father, Raymond and Pauline Majors Hinton; her maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Majors; and her paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Butler Blankenship; and

WHEREAS, Martha Ferguson leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of

Martha Jean Blankenship Ferguson, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mrs. Ferguson.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.